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ACTION ARA-00

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R 201255Z DEC 84
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4762
INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PN
USCINCLANT NORFOLK VA
USAFSO HOWARD AFB PN//DOI-LAI//

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(☒) Release () Excise () Deny

Exemption(s): _____

Declassify: () In Part (☒) In Full

() Classify as _____ () Extend as _____ () Downgrade to _____

Date _____ Declassify on _____ Reason _____

[REDACTED] SECTION 01 OF 02 BUENOS AIRES 10114

CINCSO FOR INTAFF

CINCLANT ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
TAGS: PGOV, SOCI, AR
SUBJ: INTERIOR UNDERSECRETARY ASSESSES VIOLENCE IN
ARGENTINA

REF: BUENOS AIRES 9730 (DTG 071240Z DEC 84)

1. [REDACTED] - ENTIRE TEXT.)

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2. DURING DECEMBER 19 MEETING WITH INTERIOR UNDER-SECRETARY RAUL GALVAN TO DISCUSS NARCOTICS (SEPTTEL), POLITICAL COUNSELOR TOOK OPPORTUNITY TO OBTAIN HIS ASSESSMENT REGARDING PROBLEM OF VIOLENCE IN ARGENTINA. GALVAN READILY ADMITTED THAT THIS HAD BEEN A DIFFICULT YEAR OF TRANSITION AS GOA MOVED FROM AN AUTHORITARIAN SYSTEM WHICH MAINTAINED ORDER BASED ON FEAR TO A MORE OPEN DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM WHICH DEPENDS UPON NON-POLITICAL POLICE ENFORCEMENT AND A FUNCTIONING INDEPENDENT JUDICIAL SYSTEM. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, RESIDUE OF POLITICAL AND OTHER VIOLENCE WAS ANTICIPATED AND INEVITABLE.

3. GALVAN SAID THE LEVEL OF VIOLENCE IS THUS FAR MANAGEABLE WHILE ITS SOURCES ARE VARIED. ON THE RIGHT, HE SAID THAT ISOLATED GROUPS OF UNEMPLOYED SECURITY PERSONNEL WERE CERTAINLY RESPONSIBLE FOR SOME VIOLENCE. IN THIS CONTEXT, HE SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED THE ROBBERY OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS ARCHIVES IN ROSARIO (SANTA FE PROVINCE) AND CONTINUING INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE IN CORDOBA PROVINCE AS WELL AS CERTAIN RECENT BOMBINGS IN THE BUENOS AIRES AREA. FORTUNATELY, HE SAID NO CENTRALIZED DIRECTION HAS DEVELOPED, ALTHOUGH AT ONE POINT THE GOVERNMENT FEARED THAT RETIRED GENERAL LUCIANO BENJAMIN MENENDEZ, NOW IN JAIL AND ACCUSED OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, COULD HAVE PLAYED A DANGEROUS COORDINATING ROLE.

4. GALVAN ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE MAY BE SOME CONTACT BETWEEN FORMER SECURITY PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR CURRENT VIOLENCE AND ACTIVE-DUTY ARMED FORCES OFFICERS. HE INDICATED THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS MONITORING THIS CAREFULLY AND BELIEVES THAT OVER TIME, WITH RETIREMENT OF SOME ACTIVE-DUTY ARMED FORCES
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PERSONNEL WHO MAY BE IMPLICATED AND THE ARMED FORCES' GRADUAL ADJUSTMENT TO NEW DEMOCRATIC RULES OF THE GAME, THIS PROBLEM WILL HOPEFULLY RECEDE. IN ANY EVENT, SUCH VIOLENCE HAS NO POPULAR SUPPORT AND DOES NOT CURRENTLY POSE A SERIOUS THREAT TO THE VIABILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT.

5. GALVAN SAID ANOTHER SOURCE OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE

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IS THE INTERNAL VENDETTAS AND DISPUTES WITHIN THE PERONIST MOVEMENT WHICH ARE ENDEMIC AND LIKELY TO CONTINUE. HE SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED HERMINIO IGLESIAS AND HIS SUPPORTERS AS A POSSIBLE SOURCE OF SUCH VIOLENCE.

6. FINALLY, GALVAN JUDGED THAT THE EXTREME LEFT IS NOT EMBARKED ON A VIOLENT COURSE AND AT PRESENT DOES NOT POSE A SERIOUS THREAT TO DEMOCRACY. GROUPS OF THE EXTREME LEFT ARE CURRENTLY OPERATING OPENLY THROUGH THE ORGANIZATION OF STREET DEMONSTRATIONS, POLITICAL RALLIES, ETC. WITH FORMER MONTONERO LEADER MARIO FIRMEINICH IN JAIL AS A COUNTERBALANCE TO THE ARRESTED FORMER MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY JUNTAS, GALVAN BELIEVED THE GOVERNMENT IS TAKING A VERY EVEN-HANDED APPROACH TO THE APPLICATION OF JUSTICE, A FACT HE FELT WOULD HELP DISCOURAGE VIOLENCE BY THE LEFT. WHILE GROUPS OF ONE EXTREME OR ANOTHER MAY, THROUGH VIOLENCE, ATTEMPT TO PRESSURE THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM, GALVAN SEEMED SATISFIED THAT THIS IS NOT A SERIOUS PROBLEM AT THIS TIME, ADDING THAT THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM IS FUNCTIONING RELATIVELY WELL AND WITH INDEPENDENCE.

7. ON THE QUESTION OF COMMON CRIME, GALVAN ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE HAS BEEN AN UPSURGE OF CRIMINALITY, PARTICULARLY IN BUENOS AIRES PROVINCE WHERE HE SAID THE QUALITY OF POLICE PROTECTION IS

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CINCSO FOR INTAFF

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E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
TAGS: PGOV, SOCI, AR
SUBJ: INTERIOR UNDERSECRETARY ASSESSES VIOLENCE IN

POOR, IN PART BECAUSE OF LOW WAGES AND LACK OF
RESOURCES. IN CONTRAST, HE FELT THAT THE FEDERAL
POLICE FORCE IS WELL LED AND BECOMING MORE EFFICIENT.
HE BELIEVED THIS WOULD LEAD TO IMPROVED CONTROL OF
CRIMINAL ACTIVITY IN THE FEDERAL CAPITAL DISTRICT.

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8. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION, GALVAN SAID HE ANTI-
CIPATED THAT THE PERIOD APRIL THROUGH JULY COULD BE
TOUGH BECAUSE OF THE ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENTS WHICH THE
COUNTRY IS UNDERGOING. HE DID NOT, HOWEVER, EXPECT
A MAJOR CONFRONTATION WITH LABOR, WHICH BY MARCH WILL
HAVE COMPLETED ITS INTERNAL ELECTORAL PROCESS. HE
EASILY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD MADE
MISTAKES IN ITS RELATIONS WITH THE LABOR MOVEMENT BUT
HE FELT THAT CORRECTIVE STEPS HAD BEEN TAKEN. THROUGH

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"CONCERTACION" THE GOVERNMENT HAD A REASONABLE CHANCE OF REACHING SOME UNDERSTANDING WITH THE MORE MODERATE ELEMENTS OF LABOR WHOSE LEADERSHIP HAS BEEN REVALIDATED BY THE ELECTORAL PROCESS, GIVING THE GOVERNMENT A MORE STABLE AND AUTHORITATIVE LEADERSHIP WITH WHICH TO DIALOGUE. WHILE THE INCENTIVE FOR LABOR STRIKES RELATED TO THE INTERNAL ELECTORAL PROCESS WILL HAVE ENDED, THE DIFFICULT ECONOMIC SITUATION WILL CONTINUE TO BE A SOURCE OF LABOR UNREST AND POSSIBLE CONFRONTATION HE CONCLUDED BY RECOGNIZING THAT THE FALL AND WINTER COULD BE ROUGH IN TERMS OF GOA RELATIONS WITH THE LABOR SECTOR. GALVAN NONETHELESS SEEMED CONFIDENT THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE ABLE TO DEAL WITH THE SITUATION AND THAT DEMOCRACY, WITH ALL OF THE MANY PROBLEMS WHICH HAVE BESET ARGENTINA AND THE ALFONSIN GOVERNMENT DURING ITS FIRST YEAR, IS GRADUALLY BECOMING CONSOLIDATED AND BETTER ABLE TO CONFRONT THE THREATS WHICH MIGHT DEVELOP NEXT YEAR. ORTIZ

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